

Sociozone: Innovative Sociology Learning Media in the Digital Age

Dyah Ayu Novita¹, Ashif Shufwa Pramana², Kayla Zirly Aliyah³, Cherryne Amoreyna Handoko⁴, Senandung Salsa Aulia Pangesti⁵, Eufrasia Kartika Hanindraputri⁶ 

¹ State University of Surabaya; 24040564167@mhs.unesa.ac.id

² State University of Surabaya; 24040564168@mhs.unesa.ac.id

³ State University of Surabaya; 24040564169@mhs.unesa.ac.id

⁴ State University of Surabaya; 24040564222@mhs.unesa.ac.id

⁵ State University of Surabaya; 24040564181@mhs.unesa.ac.id

⁶ State University of Surabaya; eufrasahanindraputri@unesa.ac.id

Corresponding Author: 24040564167@mhs.unesa.ac.id

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-8505-2453>⁶

Abstract

This study aims to develop Sociozone as an innovative web-based sociology learning tool that addresses challenges in understanding sociological theories, which are often abstract and unstructured. This study employs a mixed-methods approach with an emphasis on qualitative research, integrating Participatory Action Research (PAR) and SWOT analysis. Theoretically, this study is grounded in social constructivism, which views learning as an active process of constructing knowledge through social interaction and experience. The research findings indicate that students face difficulties in accessing and managing learning materials. Additionally, students still lack a clear understanding of career prospects for sociology graduates. Therefore, a more systematic and user-friendly medium is needed to address these issues. The development of Sociozone was designed based on user needs through a participatory approach, resulting in a learning media concept that is contextual and relevant. SWOT analysis indicates that Sociozone has strengths in terms of accessibility and the systematization of materials, as well as significant opportunities in the development of digital learning. This study contributes to the development of adaptive sociology learning innovations tailored to students' needs in the digital age.

Keyword: : Sociozone; sociology learning; innovation; digital learning media.

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Introduction

Advances in digital technology have brought about major changes to the education system. The learning process no longer relies entirely on conventional methods such as lectures or printed books as its primary sources. The use of technology in education is becoming essential to support a more flexible and accessible learning process. Technology plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of learning in the digital age. Today, numerous technologies facilitate access to learning apps, instructional videos, and other online learning resources, enabling learning beyond the confines of the traditional classroom (Sipaayung & Munawaroh, 2025). This demonstrates that technology-based innovations can serve as an alternative to create a more effective learning process tailored to today's students' needs.

Education is fundamentally an essential component in improving the quality of human resources. Education is a systematic effort aimed at developing an individual's human potential; throughout this process, responsibility does not rest solely with educational institutions but with all elements of society, who are called upon to actively contribute to advancing the field of education (Oktariani et al., 2022). At the university level, students are expected to possess critical thinking skills and a deep understanding of academic concepts. This is also the case in sociology courses. Sociology theory courses cover a broad range of material, from classical and modern theories to postmodern theories, each with distinct characteristics. The sheer number of theories often poses challenges for students when it comes to understanding, remembering, or selecting the relevant theory to analyze a social phenomenon.

This problem is evident in students' low interest in sociology theory courses. Interest plays a crucial role in supporting learning activities; when the learning process fails to spark students' interest, they tend not to engage fully in those activities. Consequently, students lack sufficient motivation or drive to engage earnestly in their learning process (Octavia & Sugiarti, 2023). Many people view the study of sociology as an uninteresting field due to its theoretical and abstract nature. This perception makes it difficult for students to grasp the material in depth. Preliminary observations also indicate that students often struggle to recall theories they studied in previous semesters. Course materials are typically stored as digital files or written notes in notebooks, often organized in a haphazard manner, making the process of retrieving theories inefficient. In some cases, students' notes on sociological theories are even incomplete.

Low interest in learning can affect students' ability to understand course material and conduct social analysis. Interest in learning is linked to academic achievement. The higher a person's interest in learning, the greater their motivation to understand the material more deeply.

This situation indicates that education requires innovation so that the learning process does not focus solely on one-way delivery of material.

Educational innovation is necessary to create a learning environment that is more engaging and in line with the times. Advances in educational technology actually open up significant opportunities to introduce more innovative learning media. By utilizing a variety of learning media, new spaces are created that allow the learning process to unfold in a more innovative and dynamic manner. This simultaneously provides stimulation and opportunities for students to understand and internalize course material in a better, more engaging, and deeper way (Permana et al., 2024). The use of smartphones and the internet allows us to access learning practically without being limited by time or space.

Based on the conditions described above, our research introduces Sociozone as a web-based sociology learning platform. Sociozone is designed to help students understand sociological theories more systematically through concise content presentation, structured theory categorization, and a more practical search feature. The introduction of Sociozone is expected to make it easier for students to find relevant theories tailored to their social analysis needs. In addition to serving as a learning tool, this web-based digital learning innovation, Sociozone, is expected to boost learning motivation as the learning process becomes more engaging.

Previous studies have examined the use of digital learning media to enhance learning motivation and learning outcomes. Most of these studies have focused on general learning platforms and have not specifically addressed the challenges faced by sociology students. Existing learning media rarely integrate theory categorization, theory search features, and information regarding career prospects in sociology within a single platform. This study offers a novel approach through the development of Sociozone, a web-based sociology learning platform specifically designed to facilitate theory exploration, improve access to learning materials, and support students in connecting sociological theories to social phenomena. The novelty of this study lies in the development of an integrated sociology learning platform that combines theory categorization, theory search features, career information, and networking opportunities in a single web-based system. Previous studies mainly focused on general digital learning media and did not specifically address the challenges of organizing sociological theories and connecting them to career pathways.

Table 1. State of the Art of Previous Studies and Research Gap

Author(s) and Year	Research Focus	Main Findings	Research Gap
Putri (2023)	The influence of technology on learning in the digital era	Technology supports more effective, flexible, and interactive learning processes.	Focuses on general technology integration and does not specifically address conceptual understanding in specific subjects.
Fadilla et al. (2025)	Utilization of digital learning media to improve social studies learning interest	Digital media improve students' interest and understanding through interactive learning resources.	Only focuses on elementary-level social studies and emphasizes interest/engagement.
Dewi (2024)	The role of technology in improving learning quality in the digital age	Technology enhances access to information and promotes interactive learning.	Discusses educational technology broadly without addressing discipline-specific learning challenges.

Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach with a primary emphasis on qualitative methods, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences, perceptions, and constructions of meaning regarding the use of digital learning media. It is supplemented by descriptive quantitative data to support the findings. Theoretically, this study is grounded in social constructivism, which views knowledge as shaped by social interaction and individual experience; thus, students are positioned as active agents in constructing their understanding of sociological theory through this platform. This study also adopts a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, in which researchers and students collaborate to identify learning problems, develop and implement Sociozone as a solution, and jointly reflect on and evaluate its effectiveness.

Data collection techniques were conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and questionnaires to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously. Data analysis was performed using interactive qualitative methods across the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, and was reinforced with

quantitative descriptive analysis. In addition, this study employs a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the use of Sociozone as an innovative learning tool, with the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding and making practical contributions to the development of sociology education in the digital age.

Result and Discussion

First Argumentation

Research findings indicate that students still face various challenges in studying sociological theory, particularly in accessing and managing learning materials. Based on observations, course materials remain scattered across various formats, such as personal notes, digital files, and online sources that are not systematically organized. This situation makes it difficult for students to retrieve theories they have studied when needed for social analysis. Interview findings indicate that students struggle to recall and distinguish sociological theories due to the large number of figures and concepts they must grasp. The lack of a material categorization system makes the learning process inefficient and tends to be cognitively taxing. Consequently, students rely more on memorization than on a deep understanding of the theories. Additionally, some students do not yet have a clear picture of the career prospects for sociology graduates. This situation leads to sociology theories being viewed merely as abstract academic material that is less relevant to future practical needs.

Second Discussion of the Second Argument

In response to these challenges, Sociozone was designed as a web-based sociology learning platform that helps students access and understand theories in a more systematic way. From a social constructivist perspective, learning is understood as an active process of constructing knowledge through interaction and learning experiences. Therefore, Sociozone serves not only as a source of information but also as a tool that helps students understand the connection between theory and social reality.

This platform was developed with a system for organizing content by key figures, schools of thought, and core concepts, making it easier for students to grasp sociological theories. Additionally, Sociozone provides information on career prospects for sociology graduates, helping students see the relevance of their studies to the professional world. The development of Sociozone was carried out using a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, which involved students in the process of identifying needs, designing, and evaluating the learning

platform. This collaborative process makes Sociozone better suited to user needs and more contextually relevant as a digital learning innovation.

To provide a clearer description of the developed platform, several interfaces and key features of Sociozone are presented below.



Figure 1. Homepage of Sociozone

Figure 1 shows the Sociozone homepage interface. The platform provides integrated access to sociology learning resources through several main menus, including Home, Perspectives Sociology, Theories, Career, and Networking.

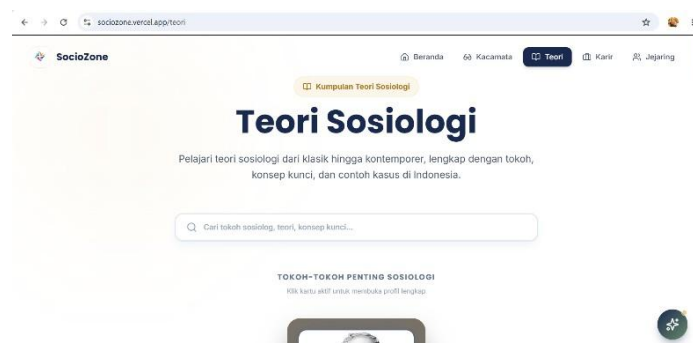


Figure 2. Theory Feature

Figure 2 illustrates the theoretical features of Sociozone. This feature enables students to search sociological theories through multiple categories, including sociological figures, theoretical eras, and theory keywords.



Figure 3. Career and Networking Feature

Figure 3 presents the career and networking features of Sociozone, which provides information on career opportunities for sociology graduates and showcases successful sociology alumni.

The results of the SWOT analysis indicate that Sociozone's strengths lie in its structured content presentation, ease of digital access, and relevance to students' needs in the digital age. The integration of content into a single platform is a key advantage that enhances students' learning efficiency. There are several weaknesses in Sociozone's initial development, such as limited interactive features. On the other hand, the development of digital technology and the high usage of smartphones among students present a significant opportunity for the development of this platform. Although it faces competition from other digital learning platforms, Sociozone still has the potential to grow into an adaptive learning innovation if it continues to develop.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
The sociology material is organized systematically and is easy to understand.	Does not yet have a discussion forum or interactive features.	The trend toward the digitization of education is growing.	Competition with larger, more popular learning platforms.
Makes it easier to find theories that correspond to social phenomena.	Relies on an internet connection.	It can be developed into a mobile-based edtech app.	Rapid technological changes demand continuous innovation.
Accessible on various devices without installing an app.	Does not yet have a strong reputation or user base because it is still new.	Has the potential to serve as a supplementary tool for sociology courses.	Users may switch to other platforms if features do not evolve.
There are profiles of sociology graduates and career paths.	Content is still limited to the developers' compiled theory.	Can add features such as practice questions, a community and interactive case studies.	User trust in the new platform remains low.

Conclusion

The conclusions of this study indicate that the development of Sociozone, a web-based sociology learning platform, holds strong potential to address these issues. Based on the results

of the needs assessment, students face challenges accessing and understanding the material; therefore, an innovation is needed to systematically integrate learning resources in an easily accessible way. Sociology students also still have a limited understanding of the career prospects for sociology graduates, so theory is often viewed merely as abstract academic material irrelevant to future practical needs. Through a social constructivist approach, Sociozone is designed not only as an information provider but also as a space for knowledge construction, enabling students to understand theory in a more contextual manner. The application of Participatory Action Research (PAR) ensures that platform development is carried out collaboratively and in line with users' real needs. The results of the SWOT analysis also indicate that while Sociozone possesses various strengths and development opportunities, improvements to features and sustainability strategies are still necessary to compete within the digital learning ecosystem. Thus, this research not only produces a design for learning innovation but also offers practical and theoretical contributions to the development of sociology teaching methods in the digital age.

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